

Standardization Branch
AMS Livestock and Seed Program
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave.
Washington DC 20250

March 25, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I manage a small dairy in Massachusetts. After researching the advantages of a grass-based diet, both for our cows and for the consumers of our milk, I hope to someday be able to transition to being a grass fed dairy. That would require aquisition of more pastures, which would take a considerable amount of time and money.

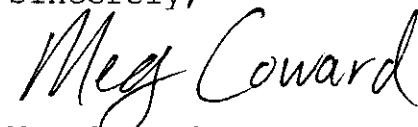
There is no doubt in my mind that the ideal way to run a dairy is to be grass-based. Given the state of agriculture in our country today, running a grass fed dairy requires an incredible amount of commitment and dedication.

It has come to my attention that the NCBA is now arguing that meat that comes from conventional feed lot steer could technically be labelled grass fed. This would be a tragic mistake that would have grave implications for both the consumers and the producers of truly grass fed dairy and meat. Consumers would be buying food under false assumptions, and farmers who have made this great commitment to running an honest to goodness grass-based livestock operation would not reap their fair benefits.

Please do not let this mistake happen.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Meg Coward

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